



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.7708 | FAX (517) 373.1450

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/gilbert/

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Contact: Jon Cool

517-373-7708

Resolution urges Congress to count only legal citizens for congressional seat apportionment

LANSING – A Senate Resolution has been introduced urging the United States Congress to adopt and transmit to the states a constitutional amendment that would ensure the congressional seat apportionment is based on the census count of legal citizens only.

Sen. Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac, introduced Senate Resolution 105, in response to the impact that illegal immigrants are having on distribution of congressional seats. Seats are apportioned based on each state's population, including both legal and non-legal residents. In 2000, the high presence of non-citizens in states such as Florida, Texas and California caused Michigan and other midwestern states to lose seats to those states with larger populations.

"My colleagues and I are concerned that states such as Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky will continue to lose even more congressional seats, not because our populations are declining, but because other states are being inundated with illegal immigrants," Gilbert said. "These illegal citizens cannot vote, yet they are affecting the representation of the legal citizens around the country."

Gilbert mentioned that in California for example, in the 31st Congressional District, only 60 percent of the "persons" counted by the census were listed as legal citizens.

The constitutional amendment is sponsored by U.S. Rep. Candice Miller, R-Michigan.

"I agree with Congresswoman Miller," Gilbert said. "We are a nation of immigrants, but we're also a nation of laws."

A committee hearing on the Senate resolution will likely be held in the near future and Miller is expected to testify along with Gilbert.

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